



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

October 11, 2016

Ms. Linda Rhodes  
City Secretary  
City of Lake Worth  
3805 Adam Grubb  
Lake Worth, Texas 76135-3509

OR2016-22752

Dear Ms. Rhodes:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 631809.

The City of Lake Worth (the "city") received a request for information related to the contract between the city and its current electricity provider. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of the General Land Office (the "GLO"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified the GLO of the request for information and of the right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.304. We have received comments from the GLO. We have reviewed the submitted information and the submitted arguments.

Section 552.104(a) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information that, if released, would give advantage to a competitor or bidder." Gov't Code § 552.104(a). The "test under section 552.104 is whether knowing another bidder's [or competitor's information] would be an advantage, not whether it would be a decisive advantage." *Boeing Co. v. Paxton*, 466 S.W.3d 831 (Tex. 2015).

The GLO informs us it is authorized by statute to sell or otherwise convey power generated from royalties taken in kind. Util. Code § 35.102. The GLO advises us, under that authority, it has created the State Power Program, through which it bids on contracts for the right to sell electrical energy to public retail customers. The GLO states it "competes with private companies for the awards of these contracts." Additionally, the GLO contends the release of its electricity contract with the city would put the GLO at an enormous disadvantage in

future bids because this information details services, and the GLO's business strategies, business methodologies, pricing formulas, and pricing structures. The GLO further asserts release of this information would allow competitors to gain insight into the GLO's business and marketing strategies, and this would put the GLO at a great disadvantage in the marketplace. Thus, the GLO argues allowing competitors access to the information at issue will undermine its ability to compete in this marketplace. Based on the GLO's representations and arguments, we conclude the GLO has shown release of the information at issue would give advantage to a competitor or bidder. Therefore, we conclude the city may withhold the submitted information under section 552.104 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup>

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at [http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl\\_ruling\\_info.shtml](http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml), or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Claire V. Morris Sloan  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

CVMS/som

Ref: ID# 631809

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party  
(w/o enclosures)

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<sup>1</sup>As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address the GLO's remaining argument against disclosure of the submitted information.